

REMARKS

Claims 32-66 are pending in the present application, with claims 43-46, 48, 49, 54-58 and 63-65 withdrawn. Applicants note with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter with respect to claims 32, 33, 35-39 and 52. With entry of this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 34-36, 40, 47, 50, 51, 53 and 59-61 and cancel claims 54-58 and 63-65 without prejudice. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

The Examiner objected to claims 35, 36 and 40 in view of certain informalities. Applicants have amended claims 35, 36 and 40 to overcome the informalities. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the objection.

The Examiner rejected claims 34, 40-42, 47, 50, 53, 60 and 61 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants have amended claims 34, 47, 50, 53, 60 and 61 to recite “each” transfer section. Furthermore, claim 40 has been amended to recite “an” elongated line. It is believed that these amendments overcome the Examiner’s rejection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 34, 40-42, 47, 50, 53, 60 and 61 are in condition for allowance. Applicants note that withdrawn claims 43-46, 48 and 49 – which depend from claim 40 – are likewise in condition for allowance. Applicants have amended withdrawn claim 43 to correct an informality.

The Examiner rejected claims 51 and 59 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Muka (US 6079927). Applicants have amended claims 51 to recite: “each of the process units *individually having* a process section for processing an object, a transfer chamber and a second transfer device for linearly transferring the object to and from the process section without rotation of the object, wherein each of the second transfer devices is provided in a corresponding transfer chamber which is independent from the common transfer chamber, and a gate is provided between the corresponding transfer chamber of each second transfer device and the common transfer chamber.” Muka merely discloses a wafer handling region 262 (see Figs. 3 and 4) and does not disclose that each process unit individually has a transfer chamber. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 51 is not anticipated by Muka.

Claim 59 has been amended to recite “a plurality of process units each *individually having* a process chamber in which an object is processed, a transfer chamber positioned between the process chamber and the common transfer chamber and a gate valve for coupling the process chamber and the transfer chamber” Applicants respectfully submit that claim 59 is not anticipated by Muka for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 51.

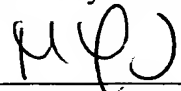
In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

If, for any reason, the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, Applicants request that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles telephone number (213) 892-5630 to discuss any steps necessary to place the application in condition for allowance.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing Docket No. 285032005901.

Dated: September 20, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

By. 
Mehran Arjomand
Registration No.: 48,231
MORRISON & FOERSTER LLP
555 West Fifth Street, Suite 3500
Los Angeles, California 90013
(213) 892-5200